

RELIGION AND SOCIAL POLICY

175

Lord Saye and Sele, " may preach the Gospel more publicly and to far greater edification in a court of judicature, or at a Council-table, where great men are met together to draw things to an issue, than many preachers in their several charges can/¹
Ti The Church, which had abandoned the pretension itself to control society, found some compensation in the reflection that its doctrines were not wholly without influence in impressing the principles which were applied by the State. The history of the rise of individual liberty—to use a question-begging phrase—in economic affairs follows somewhat the same course as does its growth in the more important sphere of religion, and is not unconnected with it. The conception of religion as a thing private and individual does not emerge until after a century in which religious freedom normally means the freedom of the State to prescribe religion, not the freedom of the individual to worship God as he pleases* The assertion of economic liberty* as a natural right comes at the close of a period in which, while a religious phraseology was retained and a religious interpretation of social institutions was often sincerely held, the supernatural sanction had been increasingly merged in doctrines based on reasons of

state and public expediency, " Jerusalem * .
· stands
not for the City and the State only . , . nor
for the
Temple and the Church only, but jointly for
both."^{7e}

In identifying the maintenance of public
morality with
the spasmodic activities of an incompetent
Government,
the Church had built its house upon the
sand. It did
not require prophetic gifts to foresee that
the fall of
the City would be followed by the
destruction of the
Temple.

(iii)

The Growth of Individualism

Though the assertion of the traditional
economic
ethics continued to be made by one school of
churchmen